

Poetic Terms

Tools for writing poetry.

- **Alliteration:** When a series of words or syllables begin with the same letter or sound
 - Peter piper picked a peck of pickled peppers...
- **Assonance:** When vowel sounds are repeated.
 - All aboard!
- **Consonance:** When consonant sounds are repeated.
 - She sells seashells by the seashore...

- **Denotation:** The literal dictionary meaning(s) of a word.
 - Heart
- **Connotation:** The associations a person, group or culture has with a word.
 - Heart

- **Rhythm:** The pattern of repeating accents in the flow of a poem; the rise and fall of stresses on words.
- **Meter:** The pattern of groups of syllables in a line of poetry.
 - Meter is broken down into feet.
- **Foot:** A unit of rhythm or meter; the division of a group of syllables, one of which is long or accented.
- **Syllable:** A unit of organization for a sequence of speech sounds.
 - **Stressed:** To place emphasis on a syllable or word in pronouncing it or in accordance with a metrical pattern. The opposite is **Unstressed**.
- **Iamb:** A metrical foot consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.
- **Trochee:** A metrical foot with a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable.
- **Spondee:** A metrical foot with two stressed syllables
- **Dactyl:** A dactyl is a stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables.

- **Rhyme Scheme:** The pattern established by the arrangement of rhymes in a stanza or poem
 - Usually described by using letters of the alphabet to denote the pattern of rhyming lines.
- **Slant Rhyme:** A rhyme in which the sounds are similar, but not exact often using consonance or assonance.
 - Sometimes known as half, off or pseudo-rhyme.
 - *Example:* Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the **soul**,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at **all**.
- **Couplet:** A rhyme scheme made up of a pair of lines with rhyming end words.
 - *Example:* One fish, **two fish**
Red fish, **blue fish**

- **End Rhyme:** A rhyme in the final words of a verse.
 - *Example:* Whose woods these are I think I **know**,
His house is in the village, **though**;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with **snow**
- **Internal Rhyme:** A rhyme occurring within the line. The rhyme may be with words within the line, or with a word within the line and a word at the end of the line.
 - Also called middle rhyme.
 - *Example:* Once upon a midnight **dreary**, while I pondered weak and **weary**,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded, nearly **napping**, suddenly there came a **tapping**,

- **End-stopped:** When a complete thought or sentence is expressed in one line of poetry.
 - *Example:* O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won;
- **Enjambment:** When a complete thought or sentences is broken into multiple lines of poetry.
 - Its opposite is end-stopping
 - *Example:* Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality.
- **Persona:** The speaker or voice of a literary work. The "I" of a narrative or the implied speaker of a poem.
- **Tone:** The poet's or persona's attitude or expression toward the subject. Tone is also the overall mood of the poem itself.

- **Repetition:** The repeating of a word or phrase to bring attention to that word or phrase
 - *Example:* WE REAL COOL
by Gwendolyn Brooks

The Pool Players.
Seven at the Golden Shovel.

We real cool. We
Left school. We

Lurk late. We
Strike straight. We

Sing sin. We
Thin gin. We

Jazz June. We
Die soon.